



NAME THIS COLUMN

THE BIG CHANGE: So much has happened at Eclipse Central since the last "Surf City" page was written that I don't know how I'm gonna fit all the news in this one. The changes have been radical, exciting, and — most of all — rapid! Taking it from the top...

ECLIPSE PUBLISHER JAN MULLANEY "RETIRES": Yes, after seven years of juggling two careers, Jan Mullaney has decided that being a full-time musician and a full-time comic book publisher takes more hours than there are in a day. With his music commitments increasing (he's written the score to an off-Broadway musical which is playing right now; it's called "Cradle Song" and is directed by Stephen Schwartz of "Godspell" and "Pippin" fame), Jan has retired from Eclipse, although he will remain as a consultant to the company he co-founded with his brother Dean. We'll miss Jan, but those who see him in concerts, hear his keyboard playing on records, listen to records he produces, or go to see his musical are going to be the winners in this deal. Jan is quite a guy, and if comics are the poorer for his departure, music will be all the richer.

DEAN DOES THE INEVITABLE: Dean Mullaney, brother to the above-mentioned Jan (you knew that already, didn't you?) has now moved up from being Eclipse's Editor-in-Chief to being Publisher. Says Dino, "It was about time to get some new business cards printed, anyway." Seriously (he almost never is!) Dean promises that the business end of Eclipse will be streamlined and made easier to deal with now that all the work is being transferred to our California office.

AND I FOLLOW SUIT: The shift in job descriptions and responsibilities has affected me too. No longer just a free-lance editor for the company, I am proud and happy to say that I have been promoted to the title of Editor-in-Chief. Never, ever in my wildest dreams did I think my interest in funny books would lead to this! I remember the days when my highest ambition was to sweep the floors of a certain office at 655 Madison Avenue in New York City. I wrote a letter to the Editor-in-Chief of this rather small comic book company (actually, I think he was the only editor they had, as well as being their chief writer), and I offered to quit college so I could keep their floors clean or make coffee or just do any little thing for them. I also mentioned that I would not need to be paid, that I would work for free, just to be near the center of comic book creation.

Instead of leaping at my offer, the editor in question, a man noted for his ready smile and his excessive use of the word "nutty," passed the whole thing along to his secretary. This wonderful woman took the time to write me a personal reply, in which she explained that the company's offices were so small that there would be no room for me to sweep. "We're so crowded we're hanging from the walls," she wrote.

She also urged me, with evident sincerity, to remain in college and get a degree. "Then, if you're still interested in comics, you'll be much better qualified and might be able to get a job in New York," was her advice.

Well, I didn't stay in college, I never moved to New York, and I even lost my interest in comics for a couple of years along the way. But here I am today, the Editor-in-Chief of a funny book factory that's about the size now that the one I admired so much was back then. Isn't it strange, how life lets you think it's meandering along with no direction, and then suddenly it hits you with a great big realization that

you have arrived at a destination you aimed yourself toward all of twenty years ago?

Thank you, Flo Steinberg, wherever you are. I didn't take a single piece of the advice you gave me in 1964, but here I am now — and I can truly say that whenever a comic book office needs its floors swept, I am at last fully qualified to do the job.

WEST COAST MIGRATION: The news is out, all over town. Pacific Comics has suspended publication of their colour comics line. That leaves a lot of fantastic projects without a publisher, and quite a number of these items are making a trek up the coast from Pacific's San Diego headquarters to our own Guerneville office. Negotiations are still in progress, and there are publishers other than Eclipse involved in bidding for some of the ex-Pacific titles, but at this point we are happy to announce that SIX books which were to be published by Pacific are going to press right now and will be on sale this month (October 1984) from Eclipse. They are:

GROO SPECIAL No. 1: This is a giant 48 page Baxter paper Sergio Aragones (and Mark Evanier) Groo extravaganza, and it also contains, as an added, last minute bonus, a reprint of the very first GROO story ever printed, a silent four-pager that ran in Eclipse's own Destroyer Duck no. 1. How did we manage to give you four extra pages of story for no increase in price? Simple — we just threw out four of the ad pages Pacific had scheduled for that space!

ROCKETEER SPECIAL EDITION No. 1: This is it! — the full-length all-Rocketeer issue by Dave Stevens (with pin-up pages by such greats as Al Williamson, Doug Wildey, William Stout, Michael Kaluta, Russ Heath, Murphy Anderson, Gray Morrow and more!). Originally the cover title was *Pacific Presents* no. 5, but only the name has been changed — it is still going to be one of the best looking comics published in this decade — and **THE ROCKETEER** by any name is worth adding to your collection.

SIEGEL AND SHUSTER, DATELINE 1930s: A look at the comics produced by Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster before they created Superman! This is a collection of historically important material from the two guys who started it all.

BERNI WRIGHTSON, MASTER OF THE MACABRE No. 5: The final issue in this fine series of full-colour work by the master of contemporary horror comics. You'll thrill, you'll chill, and you'll sleep uneasy at night once Berni takes you on a tour of the terrors only he can bring to throbbing, grisly life.

STRANGE DAYS No. 1: The world has been waiting for a truly New Wave comic — and here it is, direct from the English combo of Peter Milligan, Brendan McCarthy and Brett Ewins.

PRESSBUTTON No. 1: Another of England's finest series, by Pedro Henry, Steve Dillon and Brian Bolland. Laser Eraser and Axel Pressbutton are unique, and hot — but wait until you see Zirk!... Science fiction at its best, and gorgeous art as well. It's a new bi-monthly from Eclipse, and you'll love it!

TIME FOR A CONTEST: Since the old "Jan and Dean" joke no longer applies, it doesn't make much sense to call this editorial page "Notes from Surf City" anymore. Send in your suggestion for a new name — the winner will not only see it in print every month but will also get a free six issue subscription to the Eclipse comic of his or her choice. Enter today!

by CATHERINE YRONWODE

MURDICIIDE

"YOU SAY GO SLOW, I FALL BEHIND
THE SECOND HAND UNWINDS
IF YOU'RE LOST YOU CAN LOOK
AND YOU WILL FIND ME
TIME AFTER TIME."

"IF YOU FALL I WILL CATCH YOU
I WILL BE WAITING
TIME AFTER TIME...
--CYNDI LAUPER & ROBBIE
HYMAN, 1983

WRITER:
DOUG MOENCH ~

ARTIST:
NESTOR REDONDO ~

PENCIL ARTIST:
DAN DAY ~

COLORIST:
PHIL DEWALT ~

LETTERER:
PETE IRO ~

EDITOR:
CAT YRONWODE ~

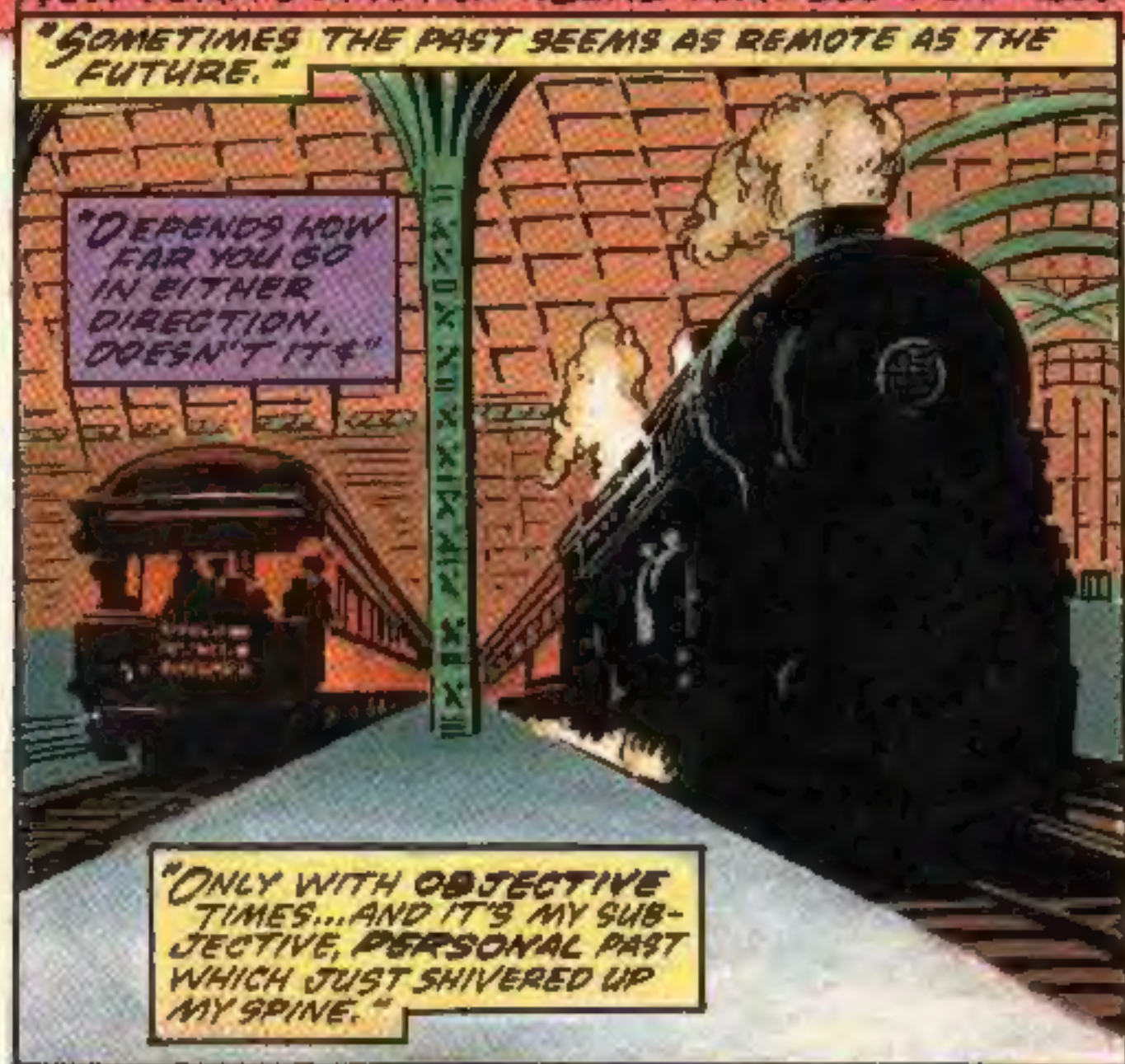
ALL THE LIES WHISPERED BY MIRROR, MASK, AND SHADOW...
ALL THE COARSE CARDS CAST BY FATE... ALL IN THEIR
SINISTER GUISES AND MYRIAD WAYS, MUST BE
SLAIN...

...WHILE I WOULD
SOONER BE STRUCK
DOWN BY LIGHTNING.

"SOMETIMES THE PAST SEEMS AS REMOTE AS THE FUTURE."

"DEPENDS HOW FAR YOU GO IN EITHER DIRECTION, DOESN'T IT?"

"ONLY WITH OBJECTIVE TIMES...AND IT'S MY SUBJECTIVE, PERSONAL PAST WHICH JUST SHIVERED UP MY SPINE."



"SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE GETTIN' BLUE, ACEY-DEUCE-QUEEN ON KINGS-- IF NOT AZURE."

"MAYBE... BUT THE PASTS I'VE NEVER LIVED SEEM MORE REAL TO ME THAN MY 16TH YEAR."



"BECAUSE WE'RE ABLE TO SEE THOSE PASTS NOW, IN THE AZURE CROSS-TIME EXPRESS..."



"YES, BRIGHTYES."

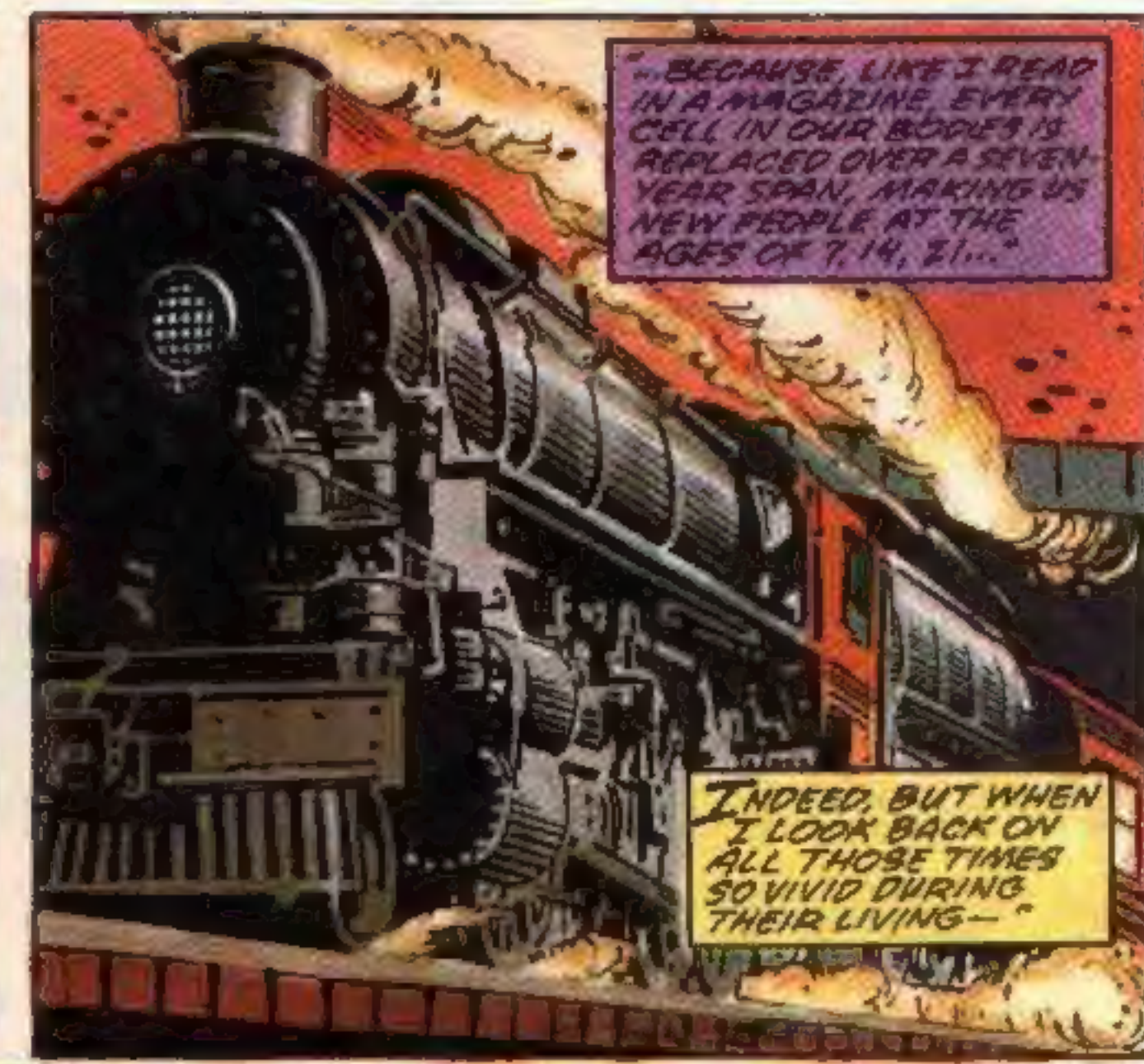
LAST CALL FOR SAN FRANCISCO AND POINTS BETWEEN-ALLLLL ABOARD!

"...WHILE OUR REAL PASTS ARE DEAD, LIVED BACK WHEN WE WERE DIFFERENT PEOPLE..."



"...BECAUSE, LIKE I READ IN A MAGAZINE, EVERY CELL IN OUR BODIES IS REPLACED OVER A SEVEN-YEAR SPAN, MAKING US NEW PEOPLE AT THE AGES OF 7, 14, 21..."

"INDEED, BUT WHEN I LOOK BACK ON ALL THOSE TIMES SO VIVID DURING THEIR LIVING--"



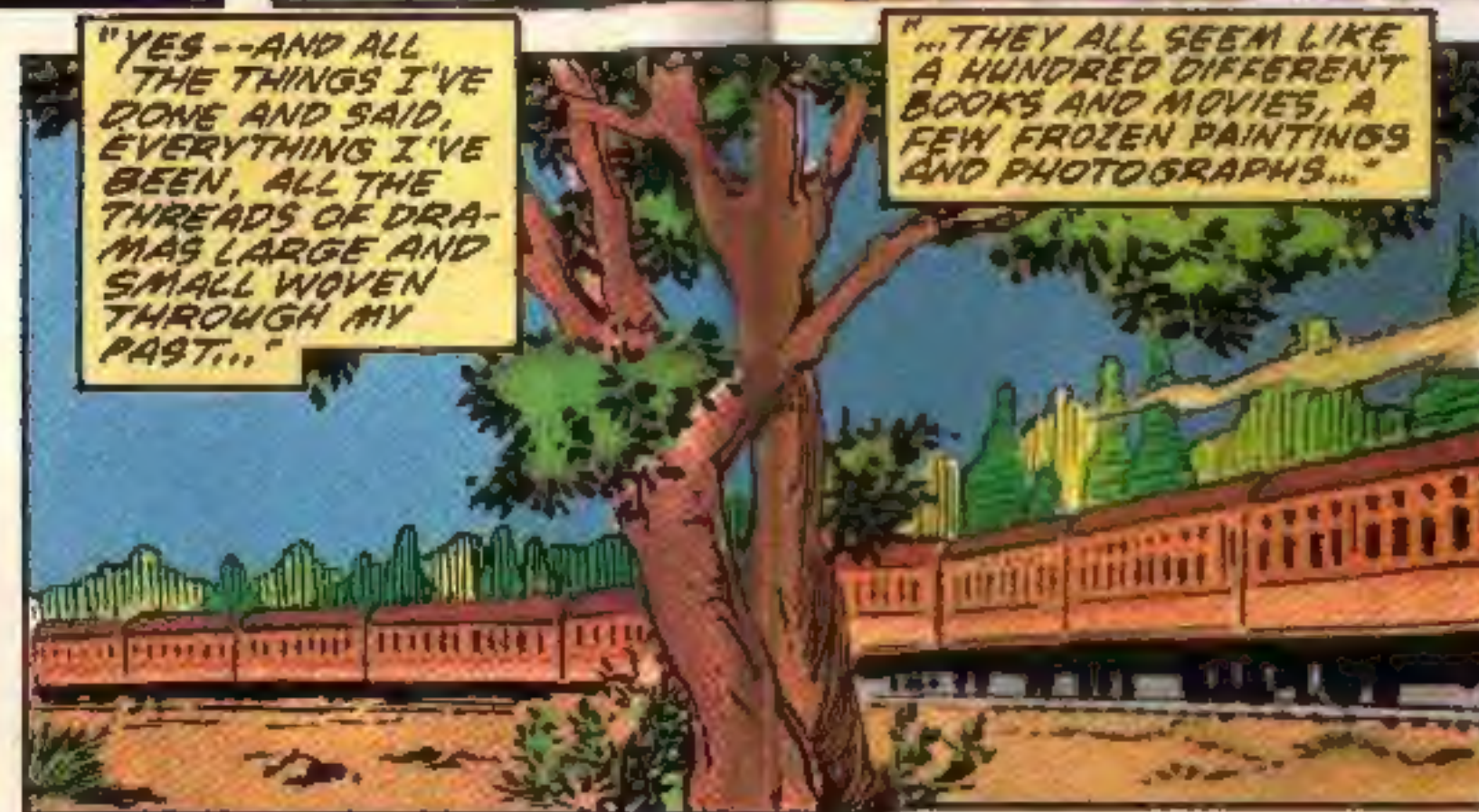
"--AND WHEN I TRY TO CAPTURE WHY THEY SEEMED SO VIVID AND REAL--"

"YOU FAIL--AND ALL THE MAGIC MOMENTS TRICKLE THROUGH YOUR FINGERS LIKE HOURGLASS SAND."



"YES--AND ALL THE THINGS I'VE DONE AND SAID, EVERYTHING I'VE BEEN, ALL THE THREADS OF DRAMAS LARGE AND SMALL WOVEN THROUGH MY PAST..."

"...THEY ALL SEEM LIKE A HUNDRED DIFFERENT BOOKS AND MOVIES, A FEW FROZEN PAINTINGS AND PHOTOGRAPHS..."



"...WHICH ARE OUTDATED AND SHOULD BE STORED AWAY IN REMOTE VAULTS OR ON DUSTY SHELVES..."

"AND INSTEAD?"



THEY HAUNT ME, BRIDGET... RIGHT BETWEEN THE EYES. THEY WANT ME BACK.

BUT GOD HELP ME... I CAN'T HELP THEM. THE STARRING ROLE, THE TITLE CHARACTER, THE SUBJECT... IN EVERY ONE OF THEM... IS A STRANGER.

FRIENDLY... OR HOSTILE?

BOTH. NEITHER. SIMPLY... ALIEN.

AS THE NIGHT FLASHES PAST, I FEEL HER EYES ON ME, REGARDING SOMETHING NEW.



SO, HOWDY, STRANGER... BUT WHAT DOES ALL THAT HAVE TO DO WITH ME?



YOU WANT TO BECOME A STRANGER, TOO, DON'T YOU?

OR AT LEAST YOU THINK YOU DO.



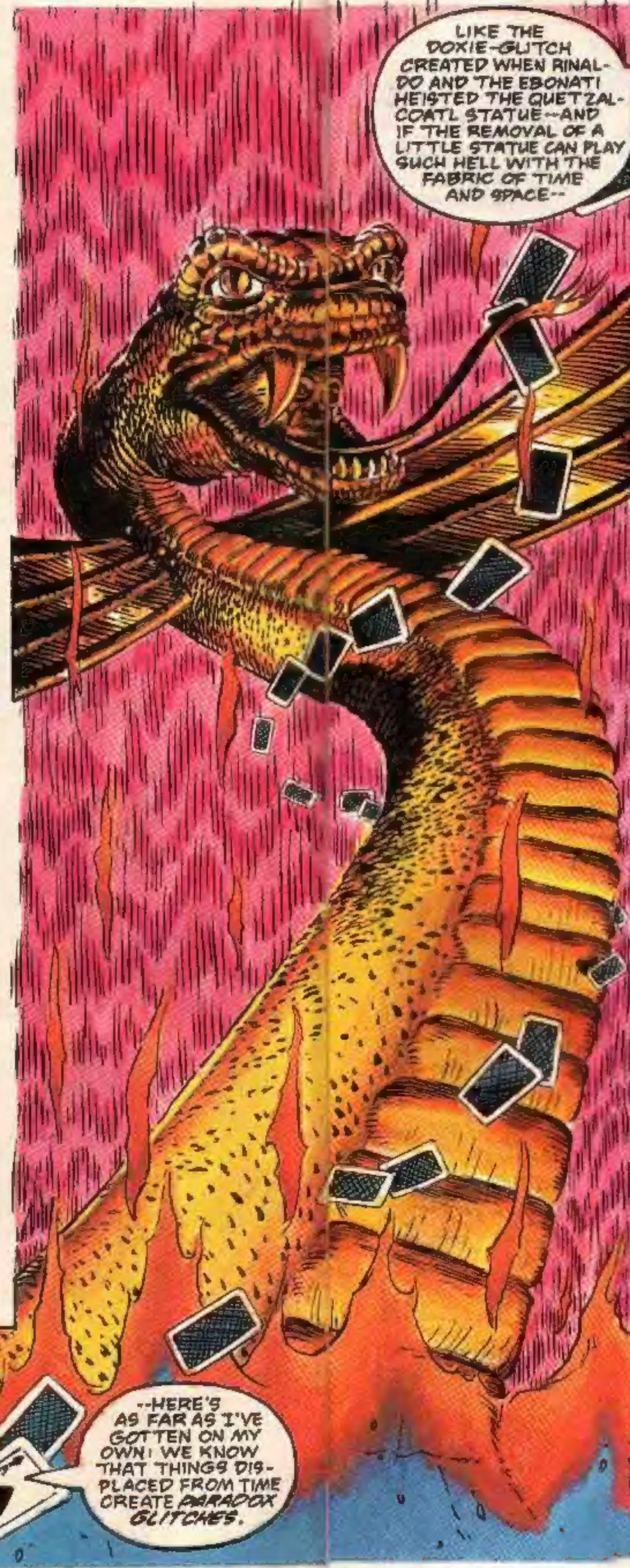
I'VE SAID IT BEFORE AND I'LL SAY IT AGAIN! YOU BETCHUM, RED RYDER.



THEN, BABY, THAT'S WHY YOU'VE GOT TO...









MEANING I'M A DANGER TO YOU.

AND TO HEAD AND YOURSELF--

--AS WELL AS TO MY WORK IN OPPOSING KROK.

RIGHT, SECOND REASON?



TWO: THE LONGER YOU PROLONG YOUR UNTENABLE OUT-OF-TIME EXISTENCE--

--WITHOUT JUSTIFYING IT THROUGH TERMINATION OF YOUR NATIVE-TIME EXISTENCE--

--THE WORSE YOUR PERTURBATION WILL BECOME.



UNTIL EVENTUALLY...?

YOU WILL PEAK IN A TRULY MAJOR DOXIE-GLITCH THREATENING THE FABRIC OF ALL TIME AND SPACE.



I'LL DO THE EBONATI'S WORK FOR THEM--BY DESTROYING OUR TIME-LINE.

YES...AND TELLING YOU THIS IS NOT AN EASY--

NEXT STOP--



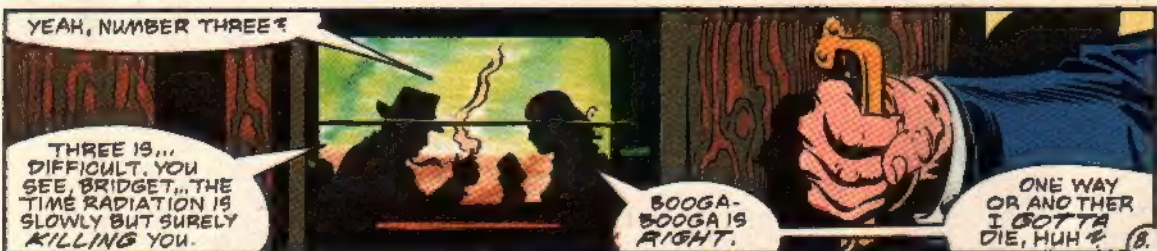
BOOGA BOOGA



--BOISE.

HOOBOY.

SEE WHAT I MEAN? IT'S GETTING WORSE ALL THE TIME.

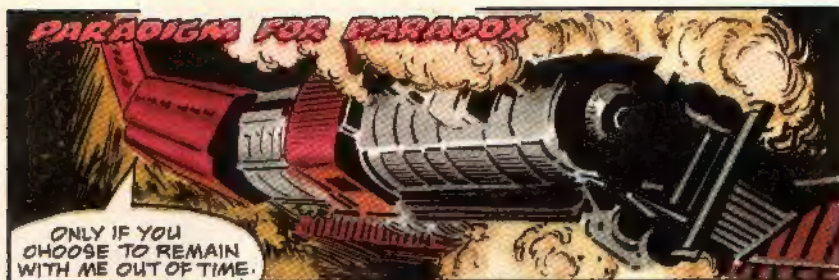


YEAH, NUMBER THREE?

THREE IS... DIFFICULT. YOU SEE, BRIDGET... THE TIME RADIATION IS SLOWLY BUT SURELY KILLING YOU.

BOOGA-BOOGA IS RIGHT.

ONE WAY OR ANOTHER I GOTTA DIE, HUH?



ONLY IF YOU CHOOSE TO REMAIN WITH ME OUT OF TIME.

YOU CAN RESUME YOUR NORMAL 1940 LIFE AND DIE ONLY WHEN YOUR NORMAL TIME COMES-- THE CHOICE IS YOURS.



OKAY, BUT IF I CHOOSE YOU OVER 1940, MY NATIVE-TIME SELF MUST CEASE TO EXIST.

HOW?

AT THE PRECISE MOMENT WHEN A PERSON "BOITS" FROM NORMAL TIME INTO A SHIFT-VEHICLE--FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN YOU ENTERED THE MANHOLE AND THUS THE A.C.E.'S SHIFT-ENERGY FIELD--

--THERE OCCURS A SPLIT-INSTANT WHEN TWO OF THAT PERSON EXIST.



THE SCRAMBLING MOLECULES ARE IN EFFECT DUPLICATED--

CREATING A SPLIT-SECOND WHEN THE NATIVE-TIME SELF AND THE OUT-OF-TIME SELF COEXIST AND OVERLAP.



SORTA LIKE A PARADOX IN ITSELF, HUH?

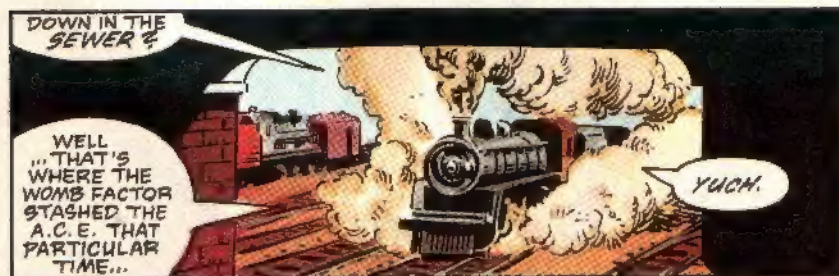
NOT QUITE A PARADOX--INSTEAD, THINK OF THE DRAWING OF ESCHER'S HAND DRAWING ITSELF...



THEN THINK OF ESCHER DRAWING THE DRAWING... TO THE TUNE OF, SAY RICHIE VALENS' LA BAMBA,

HUH--?

ANYWAY, AT THAT PRECISE SPLIT-INSTANT, YOUR NATIVE-TIME SELF MUST BE...TERMINATED.



DOWN IN THE SEWER?

WELL... THAT'S WHERE THE WOMB FACTOR STASHED THE A.C.E. THAT PARTICULAR TIME...

YUCH.

PARA-TIME FOR PARADOX SAN FRANCISCO



END OF THE LINE-- AND NOW THAT WE'VE FINALLY HIT MY HOME, BITTER-SWEET HOME...?



NOW WE GRAB A CAB TO MR. T. A. ZEK'S ERSTWHILE OFFICE--FOR STARRING ROLES IN A FLASHBACK.



EVEN THOUGH I SENSE BRIDGET LEANING TOWARD A REPETITION OF HER FIRST FATEFUL DECISION...THE EVENING, THE TIME FEELS DIFFERENT.

AT FIRST THERE WILL BE ONLY FOG, BUT ALREADY I STEEL MYSELF FOR THE LIGHTNING.

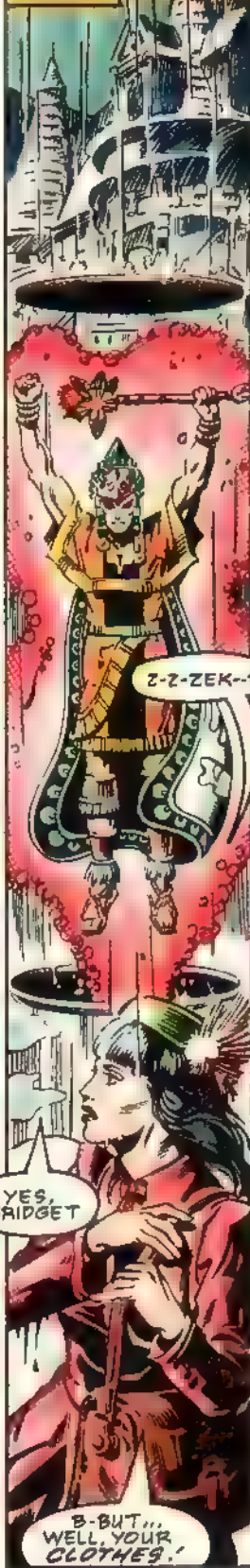


AND SO, IN THE NEXT
FLARE, AND BY
MIRACULOUS MEANS--



--I DECIDED TO
COME UP TO
THE EARTH IN
ALL MY GLORY.

A GOD WHOSE TIME
IS FALSE, HIS HEART
TEMPTED BY MORTAL
WOMAN



Z-Z-ZEK--Z

YES,
BRIDGET

B-BUT...
WELL, YOUR
CLOTHES!

AZTEC.

AS IN...
G-GRAHICS?

THE
GAME.

HOOOOO...



H-HAVE I
BEEN STRUCK
BY A BOLT
FROM THE BLUE
OR SOME-
THING?

BRIDGET...BY NOW,
YOU KNOW I'M
STRANGE...

I DON'T
NEED A WES-
TERN UNION OR
A CRYSTAL BALL
FOR THAT.



KNOW NOW
THAT I'M
STRANGER
THAN YOU
KNOW.

YEAH? WELL
I AM BEGINNING
TO BELIEVE
ANYTHING'S
POSSIBLE...

WERE YOU TO
JOIN ME...YOU
WOULD BECOME
JUST AS
STRANGE.

YEAH? MA
ALWAYS SAID
I WAS THE
ODD ONE.



WHEN MY WORK IS DONE,
I...USUALLY DON'T COME
BACK.

EVEN THE LIGHTNING HELD
ITSELF BACK.. OR PERHAPS
IT WAS ONLY BIDDING ITS
TIME.

IS...
THAT...A...
COMPLIMENT?

A STATEMENT--
AND IF YOU DO CHOOSE
TO JOIN ME, THERE'S
ONE THING YOU'VE GOT
TO KNOW

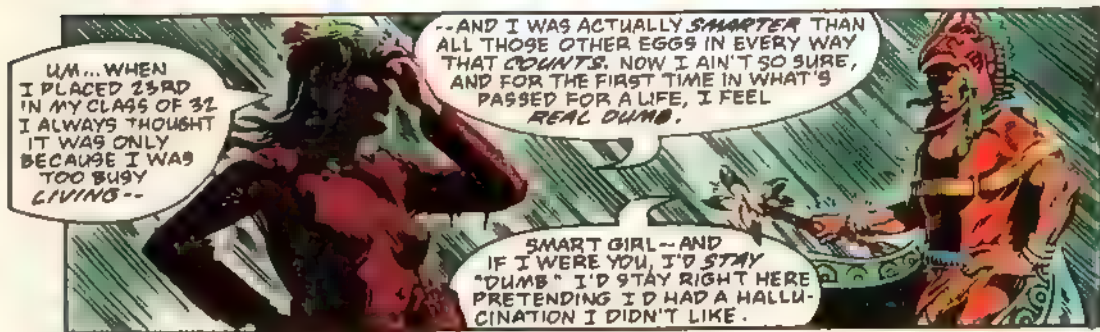
DON'T TELL ME
--IT'S STRANGE.



YOUR LIFE
HERE...WILL END.
ALL OF THIS --
EVERYTHING 1940
IS TO YOU--MUST
BE.. PUT
DOWN.

WELL, THEY'RE
RATIONING BACON, BUTTER,
AND SUGAR IN ENGLAND--
AND DEMPSEY JUST RETIRED
FROM THE RING...

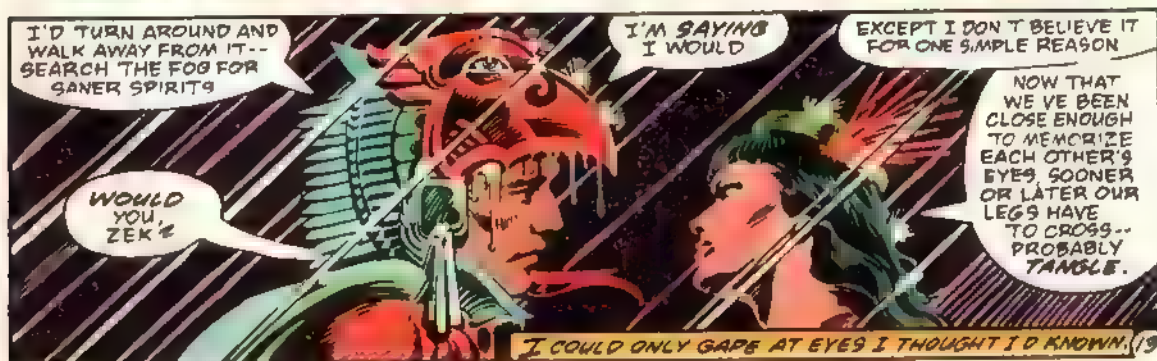
DO YOU UNDER-
STAND WHAT I'VE SAID,
BRIDGET? REALLY
UNDERSTAND?



UM...WHEN
I PLACED 23RD
IN MY CLASS OF 32
I ALWAYS THOUGHT
IT WAS ONLY
BECAUSE I WAS
TOO BUSY
LIVING--

--AND I WAS ACTUALLY SMARTER THAN
ALL THOSE OTHER EGGS IN EVERY WAY
THAT COUNTS. NOW I AIN'T SO SURE,
AND FOR THE FIRST TIME IN WHAT'S
PASSED FOR A LIFE, I FEEL
REAL DUMB.

SMART GIRL--AND
IF I WERE YOU, I'D STAY
"DUMB" I'D STAY RIGHT HERE
PRETENDING I'D HAD A HALLU-
CINATION I DIDN'T LIKE.



I'D TURN AROUND AND
WALK AWAY FROM IT--
SEARCH THE FOG FOR
SANEER SPIRITS?

WOULD
YOU,
ZEK?

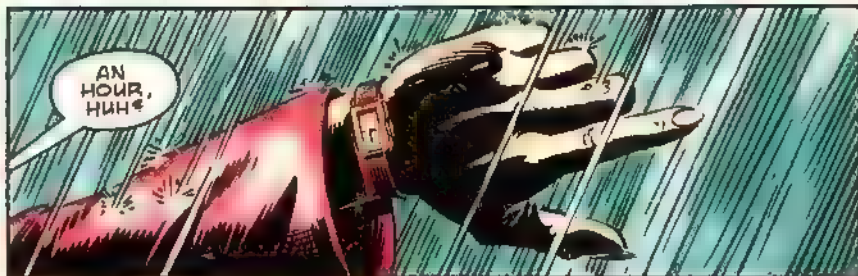
I'M SAYING
I WOULD

EXCEPT I DON'T BELIEVE IT
FOR ONE SIMPLE REASON

NOW THAT
WE'VE BEEN
CLOSE ENOUGH
TO MEMORIZE
EACH OTHER'S
EYES, SOONER
OR LATER OUR
LEGS HAVE
TO CROSS--
PROBABLY
TANGLE.

I COULD ONLY GAZE AT EYES I THOUGHT I'D KNOWN. (19





MASKING LIES



I MEAN WHAT WE JUST WATCHED WAS BOTH THE **TURNING POINT** AS WELL AS THE **VERY BEGINNING** OF OUR RELATIONSHIP, SINCE IN A WAY, IT WAS THE **MOMENT T. A ZEK DIED FOR ME**

AND IF YOU SO CHOOSE, BRIDGET...



KLANK

--IT'S ALSO THE **MOMENT YOU MUST DIE FOR ME.**

IF I SAID IT THEN, I OUGHTTA SAY IT **NOW**

HOOOOO...

HER ATTITUDE BECOMES AN ACT, THE PROFESSION OF INJURY NOT YET INFLICTED, EVEN THE POUTING FROWN FAILS, VITIATED BY A LIGHTNING-CAUGHT TWINKLE IN HER EYES..

BUT **FORGET** WHAT I SAID ABOUT "ROMANTIC"... CUZ YOU'RE ALL **BUSINESS** ALL THE TIME

ALL YOUR EFFORTS TO LAUGH IT OFF, WHILE APPRECIATED, ARE **HARDLY** CONVINCING.

YOU JUST MADE A **HEAVY** DECISION WHEN YOU STEPPED INTO THAT **SEWER**...

NOW YOU MUST MAKE THE SAME DECISION A **SECOND** TIME... BUT THIS TIME IT'LL BE A **LOT** HEAVIER.



YEAH

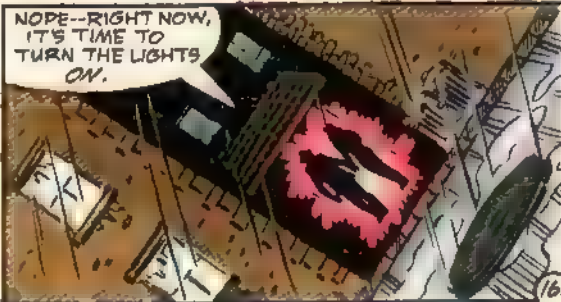
SHE KNOWS WHEN THE **ROLE** IS **BANKRUPT**, THE MASK **TRANSPARENT**.

BUT BEFORE YOU DECIDE, IT'S TIME FOR **MY** SIDE OF THE **CASE**...



COME ON--HEAD SAID HE WAS **WOMB-STASHED** IN THIS **ALLEYWAY**, AND I WANT TO SHOW YOU **SOME-THING**

THE **BEDROOM** ABOARD THE **A.C.E** & MAYBE YOU ARE **ROMANTIC**...



NOPE--RIGHT NOW, IT'S TIME TO **TURN** THE **LIGHTS** ON.

LYING MASKS

WE CRUISE THE MELD TO BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, OUTSIDE PHILADELPHIA, WHERE THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY LIGHTNING IS MORE VICIOUS BY FAR--AND WHERE, FLEETINGLY, I YEARN FOR ITS SEERING JOLT

SUBTLY, I HAVE DECEIVED HER ALL ALONG, EVEN ON THE TRAIN, WHETHER DELIBERATELY OR MERELY SUBCONSCIOUSLY, I KNEW NOT

ELECTRICITY!!

BOIT

HER INDIGNOUS MILLIEU OF 1940 HAS NOT RECEIVED HALF A CHANCE. MY CALCULATEDLY BYRONIC PRESENCE ALONE, NOT TO MENTION MY INCESSANT DISTRACTIONS, HAS SEEN TO THAT...

AND NOW, HATING MYSELF, BUT HELPLESS, I TWIST THE JAGGED KNIFE DEEPER...

BECAUSE OF THIS MOMENT, BRIDGET, SOMEDAY MANY BULBS WILL LIGHT OVER YOUR HEAD...BUT RIGHT NOW ARE WE BOTH IN THE DARK?

I DON'T HAVE ANY IDEA

YOU MAKE IT SOUND SO SAD, ACE...

YOU WANT TO CRY?

BOIT BOIT

JUST REMEMBER JOHN LENNON TRYING TO START OVER--THEN IMAGINE HIS SON REACHING THE AGE OF UNDERSTANDING.

SHE DIDN'T KNOW LENNON FROM ADAM--NOT YET--BUT SHE UNDERSTOOD, SO PERHAPS, WE ARE IN LOVE...

CHOOSING TIME

MY POINT HAS BEEN MADE AS DRAMATICALLY AS BEN AND I COULD MAKE IT, WHILE THE TIME WHICH IS MY OPPOSITION HAS BEEN CHARMINGLY UNDERMINED. I GIVE HER NO TIME TO DIS DEEPER.

EVEN SO, AND DESPITE THE FACT THAT I DO NOT YET TRUST HER FULLY, I FRET OVER HOW I WILL STACK UP AGAINST WHATEVER KNOX MEANS TO HER.

I DID, BRIDGET TOO SOFTLY FOR YOU TO HEAR.

WE'LL BE IN THE ANACHRONY DEN, HEAD.

JAWOHL. CAZA.

THERE'S JUST ONE QUESTION STILL HAUNTING ME, ACE... BACK THERE IN THE FOG AND THE RAIN, WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY IT?

WHY COULDN'T YOU SAY YOU LOVED ME?

AS AN OLD FRIEND COULD BE, HEAD IS AWARE OF THIS TIME'S IMPORTANCE TO ME UNDER THE EMPATHIC STRAIN OF WAITING FOR BRIDGET'S DECISION. HE EVEN REVERTS TO THE LANGUAGE OF HIS MINDSET.

CHOICE REFLECTION

NOW... DO YOU STILL NEED MORE TIME?

I NEVER NEEDED ANY TIME, ACE.

THE WAY IT IS NOW, I'M DYING WITH YOU... BUT I KNOW I'D DIE WITH-OUT YOU...

SO KILL ME... AND GIVE ME LIFE IN NEW TIMES OF OLD.

SO MUCH FOR THE SPELL OF KNOX AND THE ROMANCE OF TRAINS.

THANK YOU, BRIDGET.

THANK YOU

I RISE, MY COKE FIZZING, AND I STALK THE RACK HOLDING ALL THE COLD THINGS, HEAVY THINGS.

THEY WATCH ONE KNOWING, THE OTHER INNOCENT.

A... A GUN, ACE?

IT... MUST BE DONE... QUICKLY

YOUR TEMPORAL DOPPELGANGER EXISTS ONLY EPHEMERALLY...

ONLY A GUN IS FAST ENOUGH TO NAIL IT.



I DON'T SMOKE, TEMPUS,
BUT IF EVER THERE WAS
A TIME I NEEDED
COFFIN NAILS...

I BELIEVE HE
LEFT A PACK OF
CIGARETTES OVER
ON THE JUKE-
BOX-- NEVER
COULD CONVERT
HIM TO CIGARS...

THANKS
TEMPUS... AND
WHILE I'M HERE,
MIGHT AS WELL
PLAY...

I FAILED--AS I'VE
NEVER FAILED
BEFORE.

I'M A-WALKIN'
IN THE RAIN, TEARS
ARE FALLIN' AND I
FEEL A PAIN...

I... I WANTED
OUTSIDE YOUR
ANTIQUE SHOP
ON GEARY FOR
HOURS... TRYING
TO GATHER
THE COURAGE...

...FOLLOWED YOU THROUGH
THE FOG FOR ANOTHER
HOUR... STALKED
YOU...

...BUT I--I
JUST COULDN'T
DO IT...

EITHER
I LOVE YOU
TOO MUCH OR
NOT ENOUGH...
BUT I JUST
COULDN'T KILL
YOU... ANY
OF YOU.

TREMBLING, I
LEARN TO FEAR...

NO, ACE...
IT'S NOT THE
TIME.

AND SHE
RELIEVES
ME OF THE
WEIGHT.

NOT
YET.

IT WAS
NO TIME AT
ALL FOR HER,
CAZA...

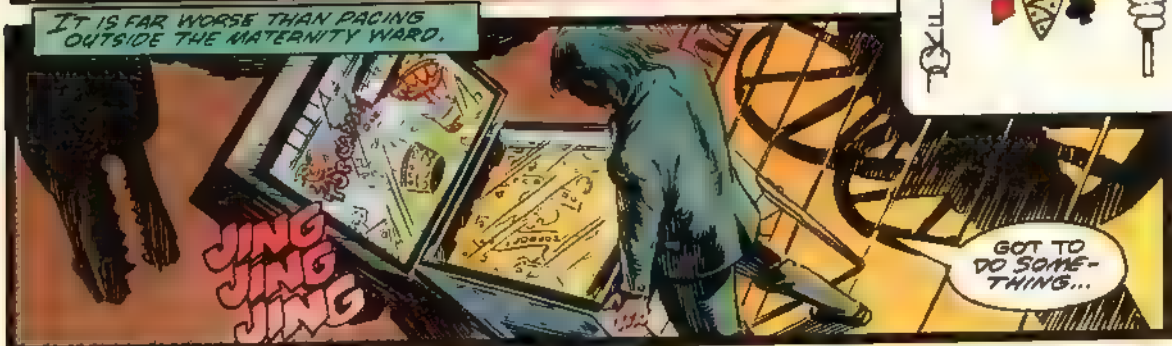
BECAUSE
NOTHING
HAPPENED,
HEAD

LEAVING
ME WITH
THE WAIT.



DAMN
THING'S LOADED
--NO WONDER HE
COULDN'T DO
IT.

IT IS FAR WORSE THAN PACING
OUTSIDE THE MATERNITY WARD.



GOT TO
DO SOME-
THING...



THERE I
AM, LEAVING THE
ANTIQUÉ SHOP..
READY TO HEAD
FOR ZEK'S OFFICE



DON'T
KNOW WHO
IT'S HARDER
FOR--HIM
OR ME...



HIGH
SCORE, HIGH
SCORE!



FOR ACE IT WOULD'VE
BEEN LIKE KILLING SOME-
ONE HE LOVES.. AND HE
COULDN'T.

FOR ME IT
ALL BOILS DOWN
TO ONE THING--

I'VE
GOTTA
COMMIT
SUICIDE
BY MUR-
DERING
MYSELF.

CAN
I?

TEON OF LIES

IF ACE COULDN'T DO IT, HOW CAN I PULL THE TRIGGER?



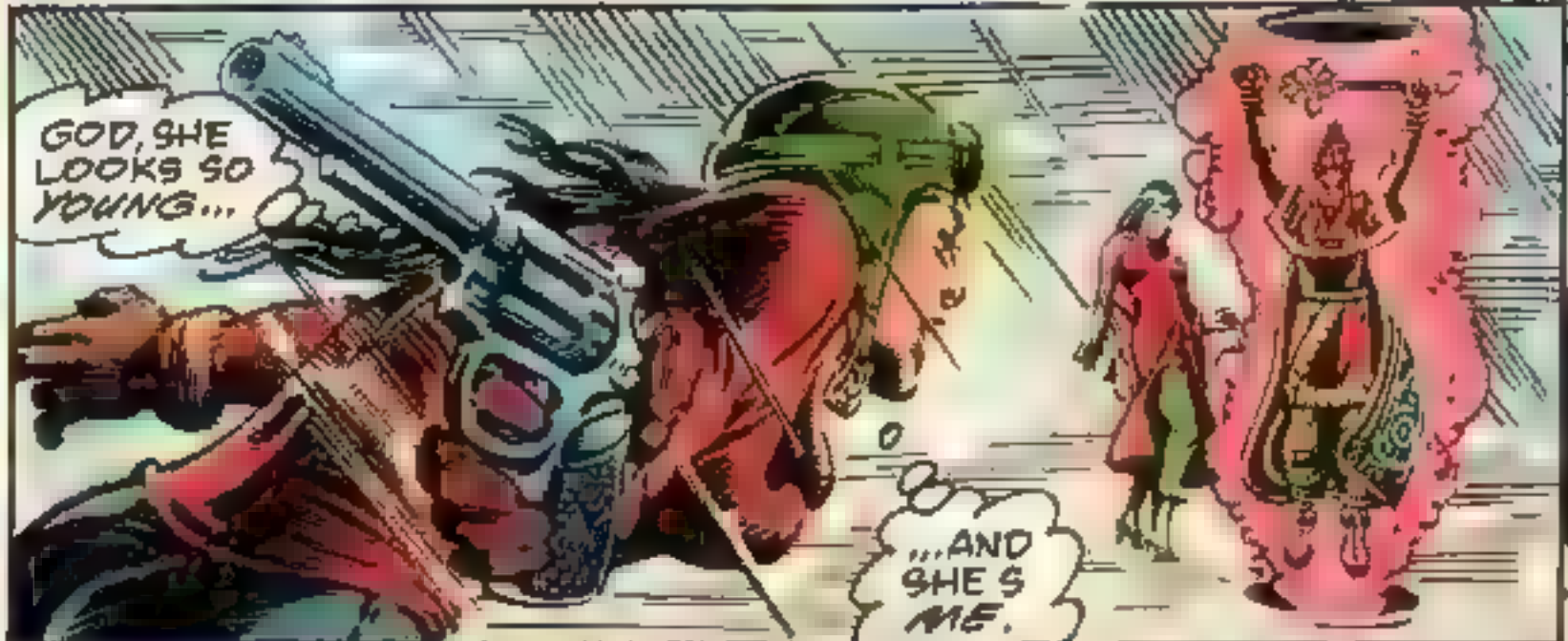
MAYBE I SHOULD JUST FORGET IT...

--LET MYSELF LIVE OUT MY NORMAL 1940 LIFE...EXCEPT THAT'D MEAN LOSING ACE FOREVER...



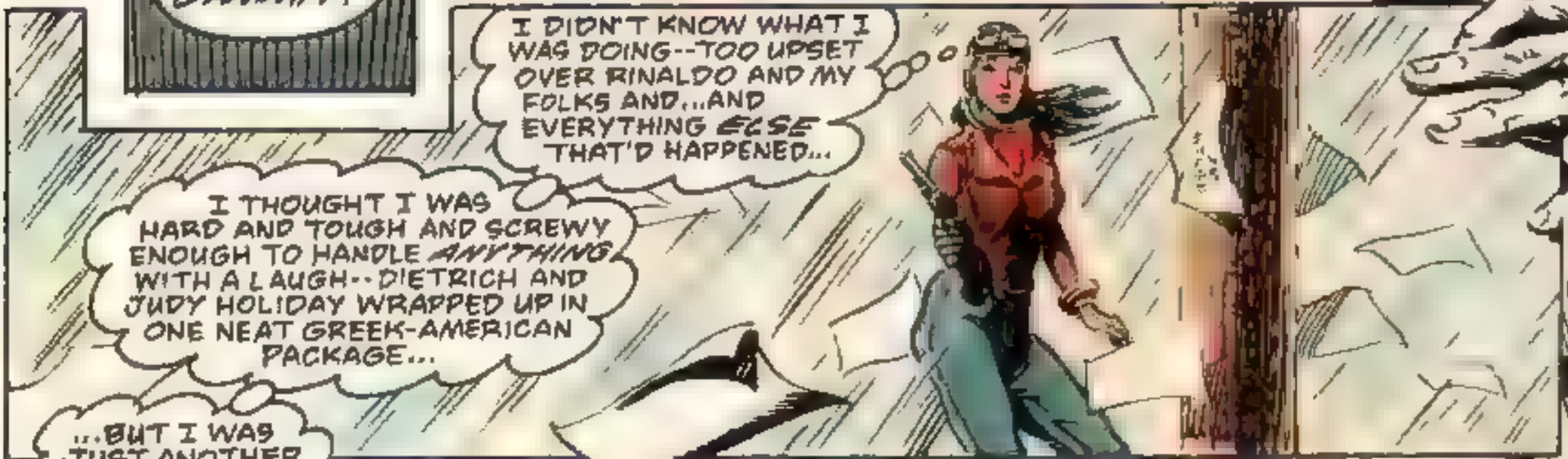
JING JING JING

HIGH SCORE, DAMNIT!



GOD, SHE LOOKS SO YOUNG...

...AND SHE'S ME.



I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT I WAS DOING--TOO UPSET OVER RINALDO AND MY FOLKS AND...AND EVERYTHING ELSE THAT'D HAPPENED...

I THOUGHT I WAS HARD AND TOUGH AND SCREWY ENOUGH TO HANDLE ANYTHING WITH A LAUGH--DIETRICH AND JUDY HOLIDAY WRAPPED UP IN ONE NEAT GREEK-AMERICAN PACKAGE...

...BUT I WAS JUST ANOTHER NAIVE TWIST WITH WET EARS.

...CUZ BY GOD AND CECIL B. DEMILLE, I CAN'T DO IT EITHER! JUST CAN'T BRING MYSELF TO SQUEEZE THE TRIGGER AND--

W-WHAT--I TODAY'S LATE EDITION--I...I NEVER GOT TO SEE IT...



AND NOW I'M NO BETTER THAN ACE...



WILLIE URGES "AID TO ALLIES" "THE NIXES WAR"



HEE HEE HEE!



ACE WAS RIGHT--AND SO WAS JOEL DOWN IN THE COFFEE SHOP ON DELANEY STREET...

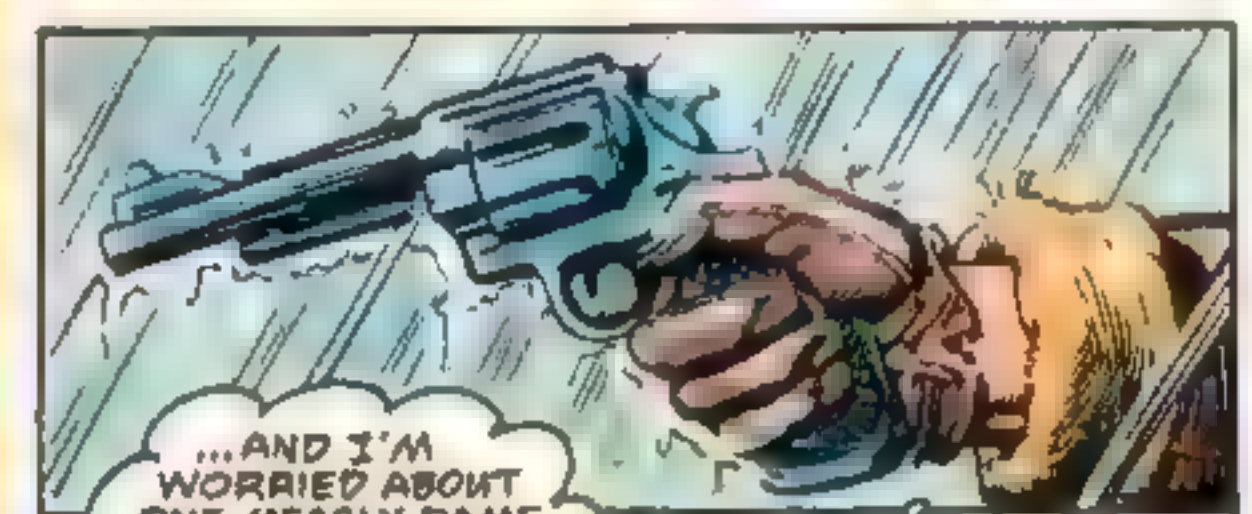
"HITLER'S REALLY GONNA DO IT!"

HE'S GONNA DRAG THE WHOLE WORLD DOWN INTO HIS LOPSIDED NIGHTMARE...



YOU HAVEN'T SAID YOU WANT ME TO COME.

YOU HAVEN'T SAID YOU LOVE ME



...AND I'M WORRIED ABOUT ONE MEASLY DAME WITH AN ANTIQUE SHOP ON GEARY STREET.

MOMENT OF TRUTH!

"...WHILE NINE-CROCODILE AND HIS EBONATI ARE NOTHING MORE AND CERTAINLY NOTHING LESS THAN PAST AND FUTURE VERSIONS OF ADOLPH AND HIS NAZIS--



"...SOMEHOW MADE A COUPLE THOUSAND TIMES WORSE.

"AND THAT'S WHY I ALMOST CHICKENED OUT--I'VE BEEN LOOKING AT IT SELFISHLY, AS SOMETHING THAT WILL OR WON'T BE SWEET FOR ME..."

AND IT'S BLINDED ME TO A REAL REASON FOR DOING IT--A REASON OF SACRIFICE AND DUTY...



THE REASON ACE LIVES ON-- AND THE REASON I LOVE HIM



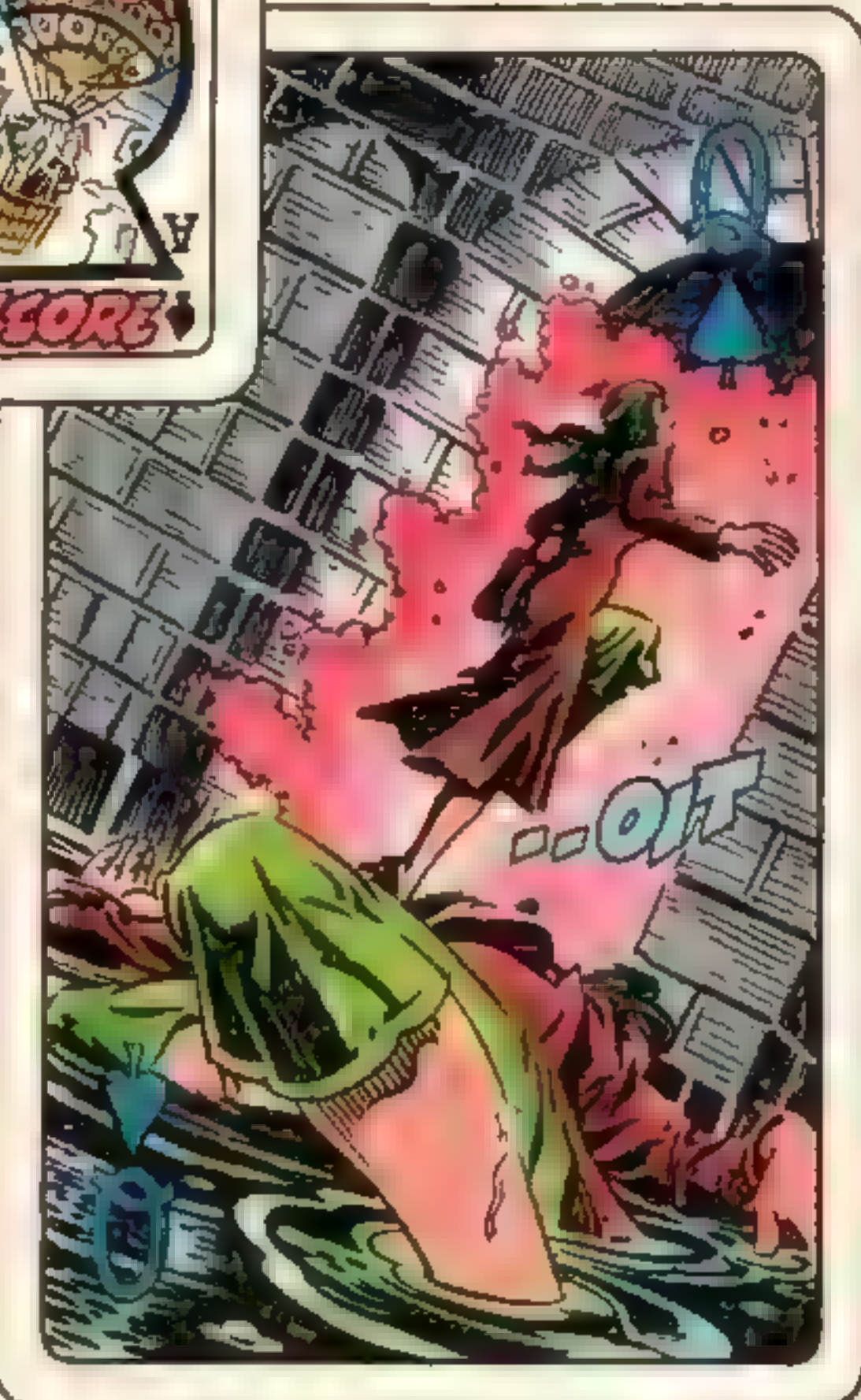
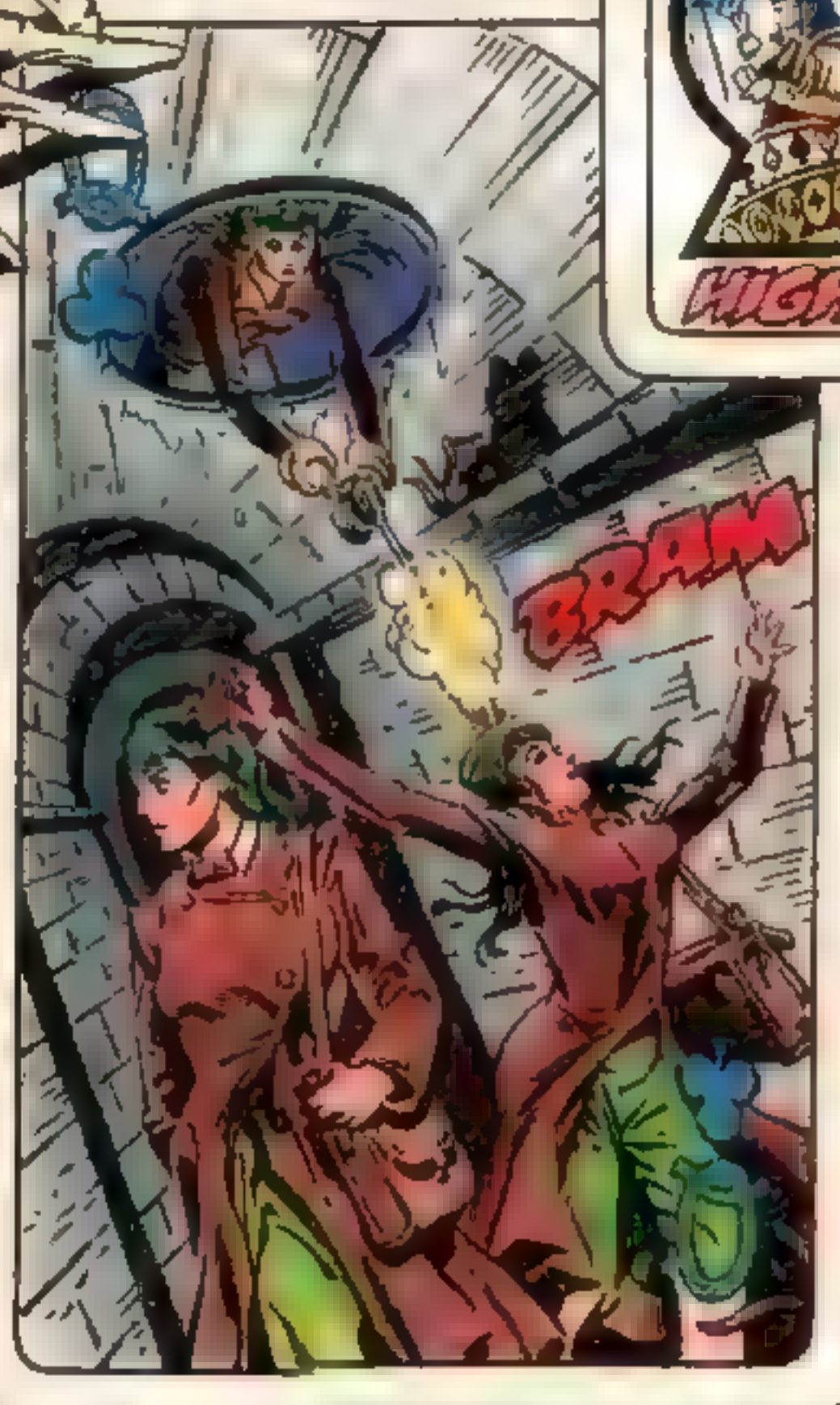
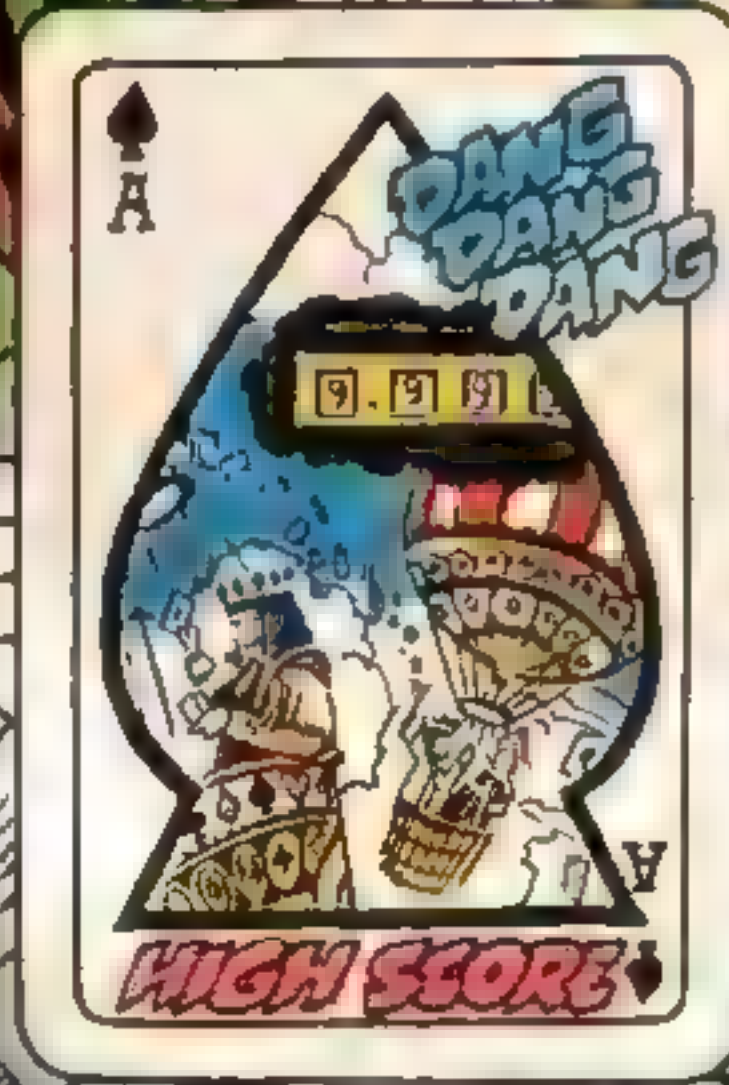
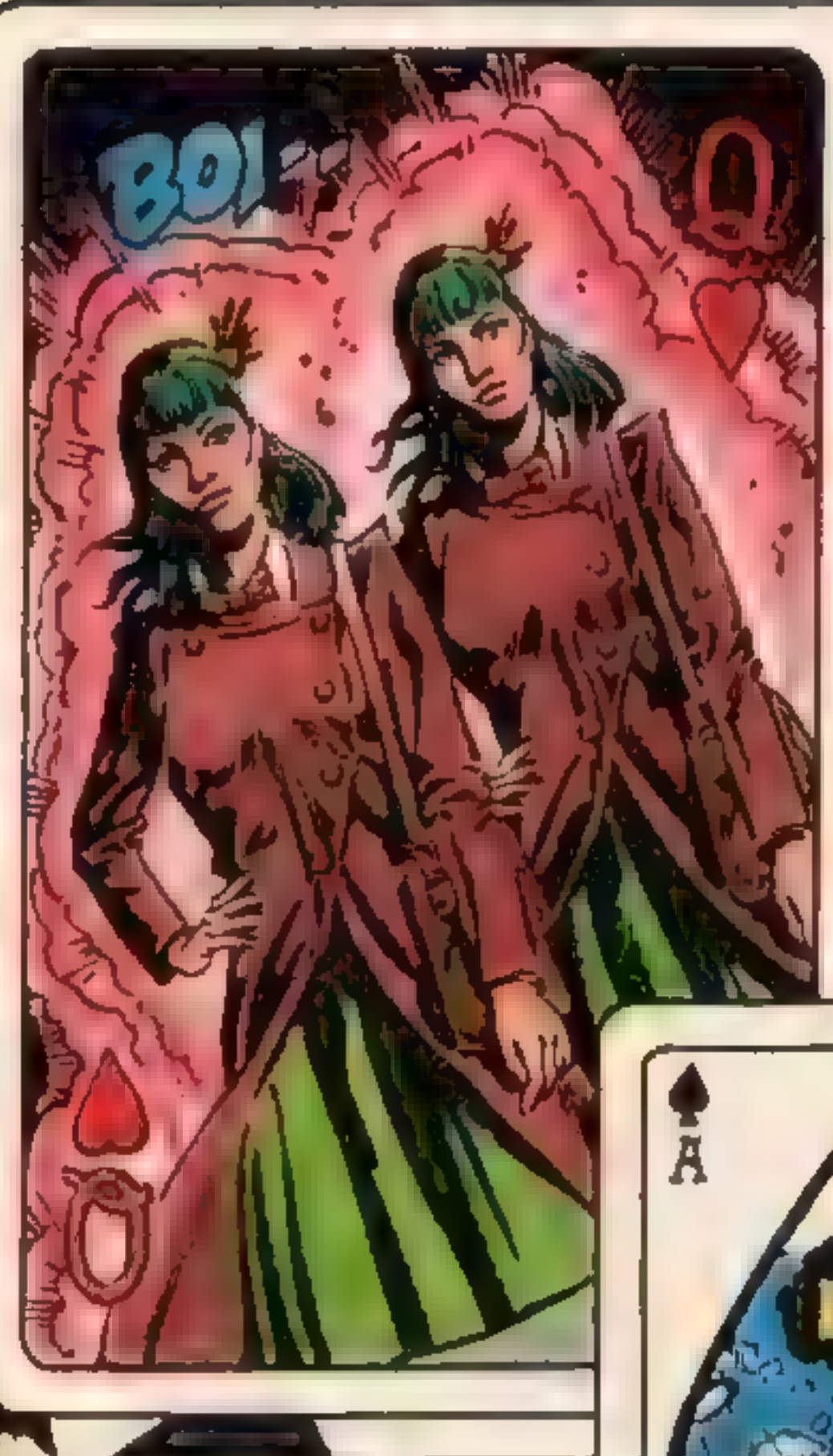
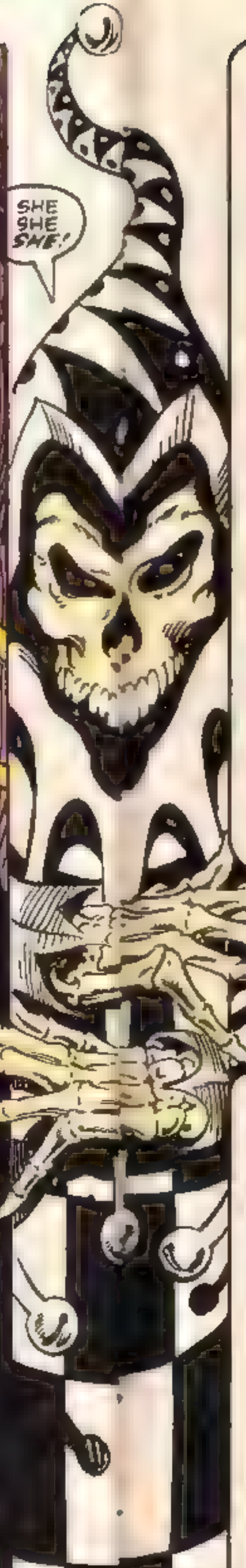
GETTING SOAKED UP HERE ANYWAY--

--SO WHY NOT?



YOU SAID IT, BABE.

SHE SHE SHE!





DECIDED TO SKIP THE HOUR
ZEK... BUT THAT WAS THE
WEIRDEST FEELING
I'VE EVER--

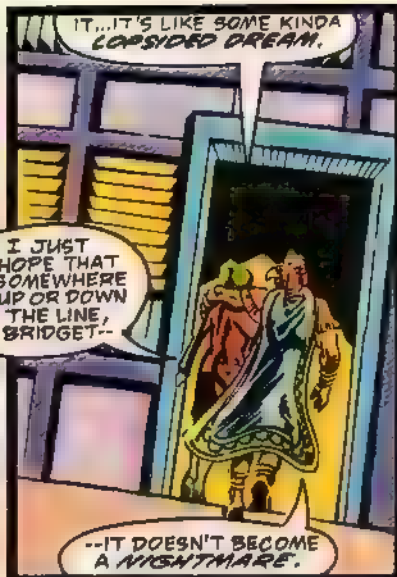
TEMPUS
FUGIT

IN TIME
I'LL EXPLAIN
EVERYTHING,
BRIDGET...



...ALTHOUGH IT WILL
TAKE A LOT OF
TIME.

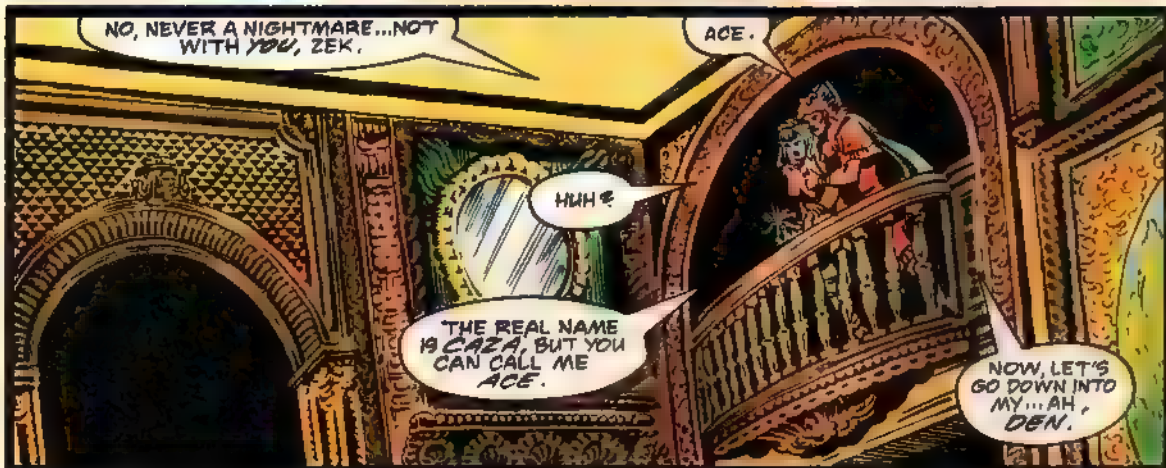
THIS...
THIS
PLACE,
ZEK...



IT...IT'S LIKE SOME KINDA
LOPSIDED DREAM.

I JUST
HOPE THAT
SOMEWHERE
UP OR DOWN
THE LINE,
BRIDGET--

--IT DOESN'T BECOME
A NIGHTMARE.



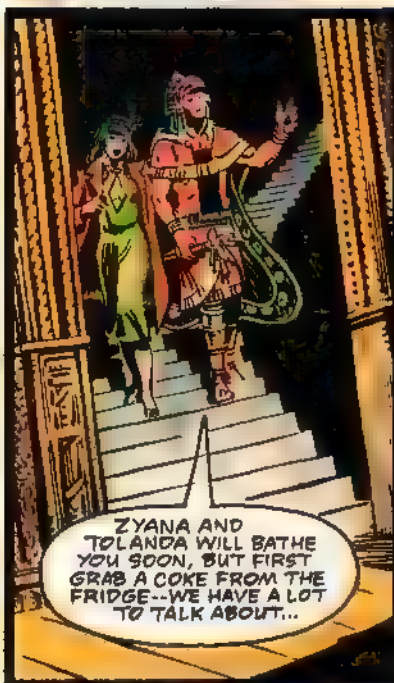
NO, NEVER A NIGHTMARE...NOT
WITH YOU, ZEK.

ACE.

HUH?

THE REAL NAME
IS CAZA, BUT YOU
CAN CALL ME
ACE.

NOW, LET'S
GO DOWN INTO
MY...AH,
DEN.



ZYANA AND
TOLANDA WILL BATHE
YOU SOON, BUT FIRST
GRAB A COKE FROM THE
FRIDGE--WE HAVE A LOT
TO TALK ABOUT...



HIGH
SCORE.

WITH LUCK,
AN OMEN--BUT
SHE STILL ISN'T
BACK...

THIRSTY.



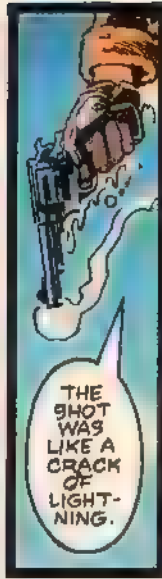
GRAB ONE FOR ME, TOO--WE
HAVE A LOT TO TALK ABOUT



YOU WERE RIGHT--THERE WERE TWO OF ME AND I WAS THE THIRD.

THE FIRST ONE WAS THE ME WHO CAME IN HERE TO BE WITH YOU, WITHOUT EVER KNOWING WHAT I DID TO THE OTHER.

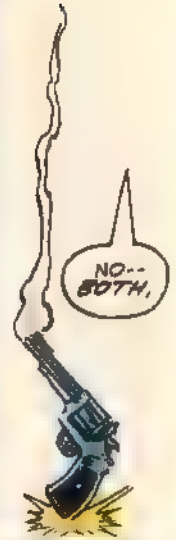
BRIDGET? THEN YOU... SUCCEEDED?



THE SHOT WAS LIKE A CRACK OF LIGHTNING.



MAKE THAT THUNDER.



NO-- BOTH.



A...HELL OF A THING TO DO... FOR LOVE.

I'M HOPING NOTHING DONE FOR LOVE CAN BE HELLISH.

NOTHING, BRIDGET.

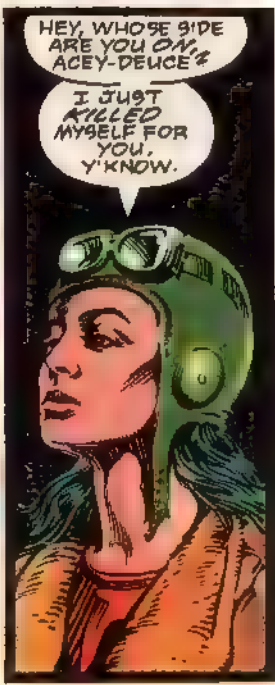


HITLER CLAIMED WHAT HE DID WAS DONE FOR LOVE OF HIS COUNTRY, AND KROK CLAIMS --

OKAY-- THEN NOTHING DONE FOR TRUE LOVE, ALL RIGHT.



AND WHO DEFINES THE TRUTH OF ANY LOVE?



HEY, WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON, ACEY-DEUCE?

I JUST KILLED MYSELF FOR YOU, Y'KNOW.



IN THE CASE OF MY LIFE AND MY LOVE, I DEFINE IT.

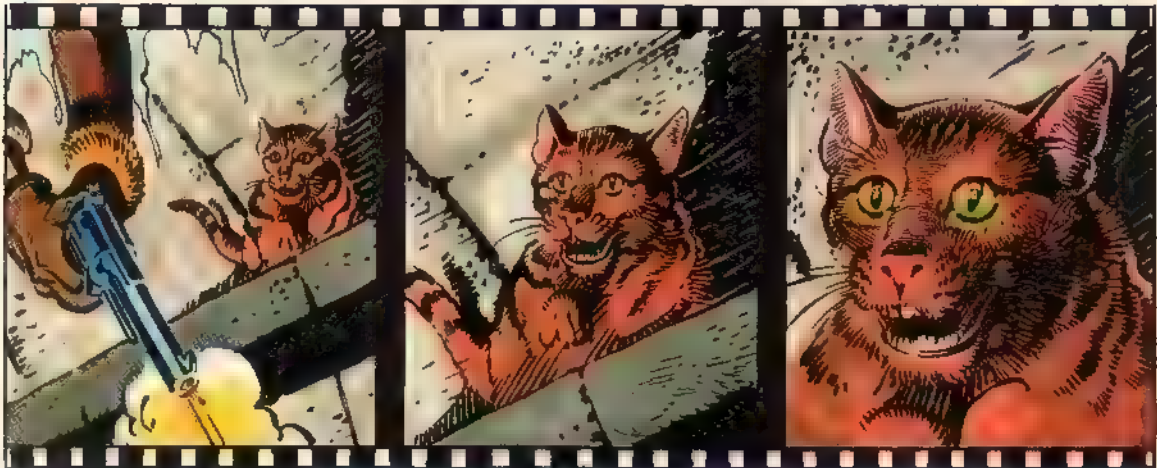
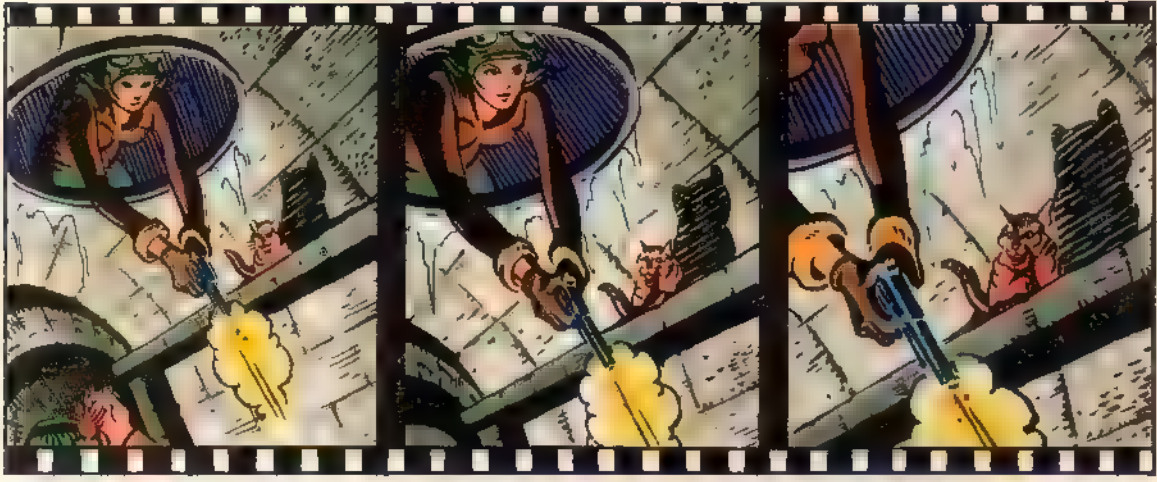
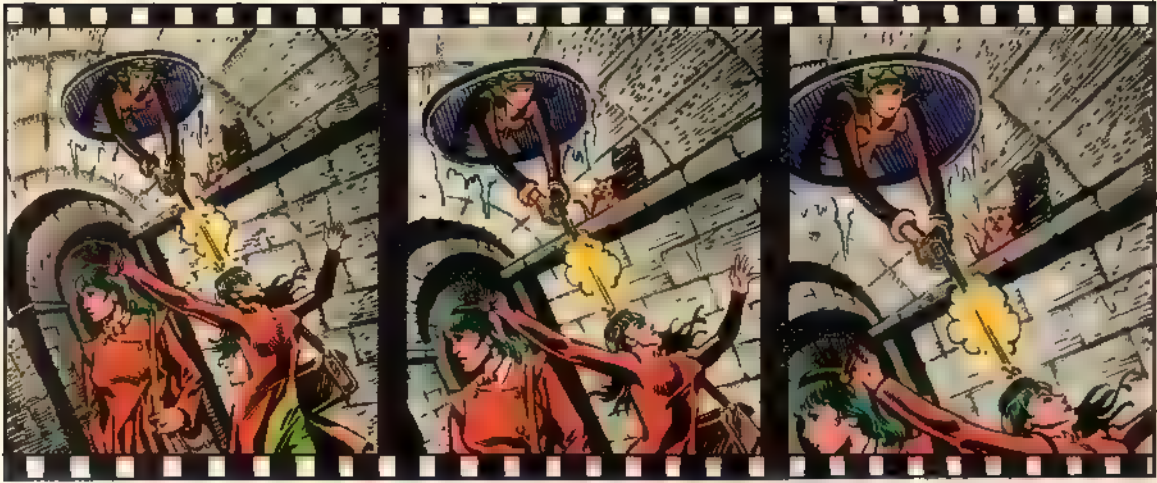
AND YOU DID, BRIDGET.

BUT IT WAS STILL A HELL OF A THING TO DO FOR LOVE.



NOW WE CAN KISS AND ALL MISTRUST IS FORGOTTEN FOR THE MOMENT, BECAUSE THAT WHICH PASSES FOR RAIN PASSING FROM HER LIPS TO MINE--

--CARRIES THE SWEET TANG OF SALT.



"THE PHOTOGRAPH'S POWER LIES IN THE UNIQUE QUALITY THAT IT PRESERVES FOREVER A FINITE FRACTION OF THE INFINITE TIME OF THE UNIVERSE. IT IS NO ACCIDENT THAT ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE TECHNIQUES IN CINEMA IS TO FREEZE A FRAME OF THE MOVING SEQUENCE. LIFE ITSELF SEEMS TO BE SUSPENDED."
 --HAROLD EVANS, EDITOR OF THE LONDON TIMES, 1983

"BUT I WOULD SOONER BE STRUCK DOWN BY LIGHTNING." --THE AGE



PRESSBUTTON #1

By Pedro Henry and Steve Dillon.
Back-up and cover by Brian Bolland.



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NOW, HE'S OUT ON HIS OWN... BATTLING THE MOST
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EVER SEEN IN A COMIC BOOK: THE REALITY OF
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NEVER READ ANYTHING QUITE LIKE IT; THERE'S
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